

# FASS 392/2 INTE 392/2

## INTRODUCTION TO QUEER THEORY

Wednesdays, 18:05-20:10; Tutorial AA meets 20:15 to 21:15 Sept 16 and alternating Wednesdays thereafter; Tutorial BB meets 20:15-21:15 Sept 23 and alternating Wednesdays thereafter. *Hall 539-1*

Instructor: Thomas Waugh, Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema, FB 315-5 (1250 Guy Street), 848-4654; waugh@vax2.concordia.ca.  
Office Hours Tuesday and Friday 14:00 - 16:00. Telephone 848-4666 for appointment (recommended for Fridays when office hours are sometimes preempted).

Tutorial Leader: Randal Rogers, Department of Art History.

### Course Objectives:

1. to provide an introductory, interdisciplinary survey of recent "queer theory," namely, scholarly ideas, research and debates, and cultural production
  - about and by lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgendered people and other sexual minorities, and
  - confronting or inspired by issues of sexual marginality and otherness
2. In a short introductory course, there are necessary limitations on the scope of the syllabus. The course is based mainly on work produced in English within the last fifteen years, in the context of the evolution of queer communities, culture and politics since the 1970s. Every effort has been made to balance women's and men's histories, theories and cultures, recognizing both their autonomies and their interfaces.
3. Small group tutorials have been organized to encourage co-operative, intensive learning about theories and representation of sexual marginality and to provide a safe environment for that learning.
4. Because of the course's complex relation to identity politics, the learning environment is crucial and must be welcoming to students of all sexual identifications. The course sometimes focuses attention on aspects of personal identity, sexuality, gender and the body that are often taboo in our culture. Ideas and images may be presented that may be controversial or offensive for some students.

You are not expected to comply with any set of sexual values, and you may always retain the right to disagree. You are expected to approach sexual references or images in a spirit of scholarly enquiry and open-mindedness, respecting the positions of others in the classroom and those expressed in materials presented in the course.

Privacy and Confidentiality: No one is required to relate personal information of any kind in coursework or discussions; you must, however, keep strictly confidential personal information garnered from those who do.

## Readings

Two texts are required, and may be purchased at Librairie L'Androgynie, 3636  
Boul. St-Laurent, Tel. 842-4765:

Jagose, Annamarie. *Queer Theory: An Introduction*. New York: New York  
University Press, 1996.

Abelove, Henry, Michèle Aina Barale and David M. Halperin, editors. *The  
Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*. New York and London: Routledge, 1993.

Three individual readings not included in the two required texts are available  
on 3-hour reserve at the Webster Library (as are the two required texts)

## Tutorials

Two tutorial groups have been organized, meeting six times each, on  
alternative Wednesdays after the lecture class. Tutorials are designed to  
encourage co-operative learning, and specifically to address any difficulties  
that arise with readings, discussions or coursework. Attendance is obligatory.

## Weekly Schedule and Reading Assignments

1. Wed. Sept. 9      Introduction

2. Wed. Sept. 16      Contexts and Definitions      (Tut. AA)  
Assigned Readings: Jagose, Chapters 1 "Introduction" pp. 1-6, & 2  
"Theorising Same-Sex Desire," 7-21

3. Wed. Sept. 23      Origins and Antecedents      (Tut. BB)  
Assigned Readings: Jagose, Chapters 3 "The Homophile Movement," 22-29, 4  
"Gay Liberation," 30-43, 5 "Lesbian Feminism," 44-57,  
& 6 "Limits of Identity," 58-71.

4. Wed. Sept. 30      Queer Identities and Theories (Tut. AA)  
Assigned Readings: Jagose, Chapter 7 "Queer" 72-100  
IMAGE ET NATION FESTIVAL: SEPT 24 TO OCT 4

5. Wed. Oct. 7      Summing Up      (Tut. BB)

Assigned Readings:      Jagose, Chapters 8 "Contestations of Queer," 101-126 & 9 "Afterword," 127-132

Quiz on Jagose (45 minutes).

SEX ON THE EDGE CONFERENCE: OCT 9 TO 11

6. Wed. Oct. 14      Sexual Politics      (Tut. AA)

Assigned Readings:      Gayle Rubin, "Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality," Abelove, 3-44.

7. Wed. Oct. 21      His/Hers/tory/ies (Tut. BB)

Assigned Readings:      Michel Foucault, from *History of Sexuality, Vol. 1* (New York: Vintage, 1980), 2-13, 36-49. On reserve at Webster. Webster reserve.

David Halperin, "Is There a History of Sexuality?" Abelove, 416-431

8. Wed. Oct. 28      Cultural Constructions of Sexual Diversity (Tut. AA)

Assigned Readings:      Serena Nanda, "Hijras as Neither Man Nor Woman," Abelove, 542-552.

Tomas Almaguer, "Chicano Men: A Cartography of Homosexual Identity and Behavior," Abelove, 255-273.

Gary Kinsman, *The Regulation of Desire: Sexuality in Canada* (Montreal: Black Rose, 1987) (excerpts 65-80). Webster reserve.

9. Wed. Nov. 4      Gender/Performance      (Tut. BB)

Assigned Readings:      Judith Butler, "Imitation and Gender Insubordination," Abelove, 307-320.

10. Wed. Nov. 11      Knowledge, Secrets and Definitions (Tut. AA)

Assigned Readings:      Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "The Epistemology of the Closet," Abelove, 44-61.

11. Wed. Nov. 18 Representation I: k.d. lang (Tut. BB)

Assigned Readings: Sue-Ellen Case, "Toward a Butch-Femme Aesthetic," Abelove, 294-306.

Martha Mockus, "Queer Thoughts on Country Music and k.d. lang," in Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood, and Gary C.Thomas, eds., *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology* (New York and London: Routledge, 1994), 257-271. Webster reserve.

12. Wed. Nov. 25 Representation II: Mapplethorpe (Tut. AA)

Assigned Readings: Kobena Mercer, "Looking for Trouble," Abelove, 350-359.

Richard Meyer, "Robert Mapplethorpe and the Discipline of Photography," Abelove, 360-380.

13. Wed. Dec. 2 (Randal Rogers) Science/Politics: AIDS (Tut. AB<sup>B</sup>)

Assigned Readings: Simon Watney, "The Spectacle of AIDS," Abelove, 202-211

Cindy Patton, "From Nation to Family: Containing African AIDS," Abelove, 127-140

#### Course Requirements

There are four requirements:

- an attendance/participation requirement
- an in-class reading quiz, worth 20%
- a directed journal worth 40%
- a term paper or take-home exam, worth 40%

All requirements must be satisfactorily fulfilled in order to receive a passing grade for the course.

All work, except for the in-class quiz, must be typed, doubled spaced, one side only, approximately 250 words per side. English or French. Always retain a photocopy of submitted work: we are not responsible for lost coursework.

No extensions or incompletes are allowed and no late work will be accepted except on documented medical or other substantive compassionate grounds.

The instructor will grade the final term paper or take-home exam. The quiz and journal will be graded by the tutorial leader, and read by the instructor.

1. Attendance. Because of the emphasis on discussion and interactive and co-operative learning, attendance is required. With absence from more than 2 class meetings or from more than 1 tutorial, course credit is not given.

2. Reading quiz. A 45-minute quiz to help you synthesize your understanding of the required book *Queer Theory*, to be written in class October 7. No makeups. Worth 20%.

3. Directed Journal: worth 40%.

Five entries (2 pages each). Each entry must be structured to include

- a synopsis
- connections to ideas arising in the course, and
- a personal reflection or response.

The five entries must address the following events or materials:

i) keynote addresses at the "Sex on the Edge" conference (on sexuality and marginality, October 9 to 11. Concordia University), 7pm October 9 (you may substitute one other conference session, if you cannot attend the keynote addresses).

Admission to "Sex on the Edge" is free for Concordia undergraduates. Conference website is [http://artsci-ccwin.concordia.ca/comm/sex\\_on\\_edge](http://artsci-ccwin.concordia.ca/comm/sex_on_edge)

ii) any other session at "Sex on the Edge"

iii) one programme at "Image & Nation" festival of queer cinema and video September 24 to October 4

iv) any one set of class readings together with the related class lecture/discussion

v) choice: any set of readings/class; any relevant current affair; any media or cultural event you find relevant; either of the two Concordia HIV Community Lectures on HIV, October 24 (Dr. Rommel Mendès-Leite, in French) and November 12 (Dr. Luc Montagnier).

First instalment, items i to iii, due Oct 28

Second instalment, items iv and v, due Dec. 2

3. Final Assignment: choice of Term paper or Take Home Exam: 10 pages:

• Term paper. Your topic must be taken from those suggested in class, or else approved by the instructor or tutorial leader in writing before November 11. A one-page prospectus, including preliminary bibliography and outline must be submitted November 25.

• Take-home Examination. Two essay questions, distributed Dec. 2.

Both term paper and take-home are Dec 11 by 5pm. If you wish your work returned with comments and grade, attach a self-addressed and stamped envelope.

### Deadline Summary

Sept 24-Oct 4 "Image & Nation"  
Oct 7: reading quiz on *Queer Theory*  
Oct 9-11 "Sex on the Edge"  
Oct 28: directed journal, first instalment due  
Nov 11: term paper topic must be approved  
Nov 25: hand in 1-page term paper prospectus  
Dec 2: directed journal, second instalment due  
Dec 2: take-home questions distributed  
Dec 11, 5pm: term paper and take-home due. Attach SASE.